Courtland story dates to 1930's, Lindsey Crawley

The first sewing operation or garment company in Appomattox dates back to the 1930's when the late Lindsey Crawley 'opened shop' over the A. T. Inge Store on Main Street in the facilities now occupied by the Gaines' Jewelers and Appomattox Electronic Service.

Mrs. A. T. Inge of Inge's Store remembers that first garment company well.

"Mr. Crawley had 28 machines in the beginning. You know, those girls were the backbone of our business. They would go upstairs and work hard and come down to our store and spend some of their earnings with us. Some of those women still come by to see me."

The next location of the first garment company in Appomattox was across the tracks from the original location. It was housed in a building owned by the late Walter Hancock. The next site of operation was on Main Street in a building owned by Appomattox Hardware Co.

In 1946 the business became Appomattox Garment Company Inc. and moved into a new 15,000 square foot building on Highway 460. Today that original building has had ten additions and contains over 125,000 square feet.

Appomattox Garment Company continued in operation, producing children's clothing util 1968 when it was sold to Genesco. On January 3, 1978 Genesco was sold to Courtland Manufacturing Co., Inc.

President of Courtland Manufacturing Co. Inc. is Fred Lawson; other officers include, Sam Ferguson, Vice President; David Caldwell, Vice President; Smith Elder, Vice President; and Roger Clark, Secretary and Treasurer.

Today Courtland employs approximately 1,000 people manufacturing ladies and childrens clothing in eleven plants located in Central Virginia and North Carolina.

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'Chicken Palace' owner

Barksdale: he loves to talk chicken

Some folks like to talk turkey. Doug Barksdale talks chicken.

Barksdale, the 32-year-old proprietor of the Chicken Palace Restaurant in Appomattox, is approaching his first anniversary as an Appomattox restaurant owner. He opened the Chicken Palace on April 16,1981.

Since that time, Barksdale says, the business has grown steadily and the people of Appomattox have shown an increasing appreciation for Barksdale's special chicken recipe.

"Our summer business last year was very good," says Barksdale. "And our winter business was much better than we ever expected."

Barksdale attributes his restaurant's success partly to the increased lunch business brought on by an expanded menu and daily lunch specials.

"The lunch crowd is much improved over last year," Barksdale notes. "We've added more sandwiches, such as hot roast beef, hot barbecue, and ham and cheese. Also, we've started making our own chili, soup, cole slaw, and other items," he says.

"The daily specials have also boosted our lunch business," Barksdale adds. He notes that any day of the week, a person can come into the restaurant and eat that day's designated "special" at a bargain price.

Barksdale, a native of Phenix, Va. says the Chicken Palace represents his first venture into the restaurant world, but is far from his first experience in managing a business.

He managed Hills Department Stores for nine years from Columbus, Ohio to Altoona, Pa., and many points between.

"I got into the restaurant business because I wanted to own my own business, and I had some exposure to the food business. One of the department stores had a restaurant in it," Barksdale says.

"I located in Appomattox because I like the area," Barksdale adds. He and his wife, Lois Ann, live at the Thomas Terrace Apartments on Route 460. They have one boy, Brett Edward, born Christmas day last year.

Along with the menu expansions of the past year, Barksdale plans further additions to his restaurant's offerings in the future. "One of the things we will add for the summer is soft ice cream," he notes. "A family can stop in for chicken, and if the kids or their folks want ice cream or a milk shake, they can get it," he says.

"But our specialty is still and always will be chicken," Barksdale notes. "We have our own special recipe for the batter, and we always use fresh chicken, never frozen chicken."

Barksdale says that his chicken has "caught on well" with people in Appomattox. The restaurant frequently gets large call-in orders from area industries and businesses, and picnic planners as well as church groups and other organizations have found the Chicken Palace product to their liking, particularly for large gatherings.

"We offer discounts to quantity orders," Barksdale says. "Church groups and other organizations, as well as family gatherings have found this to their liking," he notes.

So the Chicken Palace, which will be a year old Sunday (April 18), has found its niche in Appomattox. And its owner, Doug Barksdale, is still having a blast talking chicken.

Mac's Lawn & Garden

Mac's Lawn and Garden Equipment Center, located at 11 Commerce Street, Appomattox, opened for business in September of 1978. C. Lewis McDearmon, Jr. is owner and operator.

McDearmon, who worked out of his home in the very beginning said, "I started out with the Wheelhorse dealership with the intention of someday opening a complete outdoor power center. We now carry the Wheelhorse line of lawn and garden tractors and attachments."

In addition to Wheelhorse, the center stocks Husqvarna Power Saws.

"Lewbo", as McDearmon is known to his fellow workers, was educated in the public schools of Appomattox County. He is a graduate of VPI/SU and taught for a time in the Augusta School System before returning to Tech to work on his Master's Degree. While getting his Master's he held a teaching position at Tech and upon completion of his graduate work he accepted a teaching position in the Campbell County School system.

McDearmon left the field of education on 1964 to join his father, C. Lewis McDearmon, Sr. as a partner in the Appomattox Oil Company.

He is married to the former Cheryl Brooks and they are the parents of four children.

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